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**Hamilton County Residents ask Attorney General and Secretary of State
To look into Possible Illegality of Sheriff Simon Leis's Actions**

A group of Hamilton County residents have sent letters to Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann and Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner asking them “to determine if Sheriff Simon Leis of Hamilton County has engaged in illegal activity.” Dann is the state’s top law enforcement official and Jennifer Brunner is the state’s top election official.

The letter reads: “We write to ask you to determine if Sheriff Simon Leis of Hamilton County has engaged in illegal activity. We have three questions we want to raise. First, did Simon Leis violate state law by writing and sending by email, on county computers, a letter instructing Hamilton County employees who are his subordinates on how to vote in a county election? Second, did Simon Leis violate the law by having county-owned equipment such as vehicles and aircraft that were paraded in the Harvest Festival in Cincinnati decorated with signs urging citizens to vote a certain way in a county election? Third, has Simon Leis violated the law by threatening to sue and otherwise intimidating citizens who challenged his behavior in the first two cases?”

“Several of us who signed this letter are public employees who work for the Federal, state or county government,” said Dan La Botz who teaches at the University of Cincinnati. “We believe that it is important to defend the right of public employees’ to vote in elections without coercion from their supervisors. We also question the appropriateness of the Sheriff’s use of taxpayer dollars, in the form of county computers and equipment, to advance his position on an election issue.”

Sheriff Leis has admitted that he sent an email to county employees urging them to vote for the sales tax that would finance a new and much larger county jail. The tax has been opposed by a variety of organizations, most notably by the No Jail Tax Political Action Committee (nojailtax.org) which led the successful fight to defeat the jail in the last election. The NAACP and the Green Party also oppose the tax and the jail.

For more information contact: Dan La Botz at 513-600-9405.

For information on the jail tax see: nojailtax.org